MASTER
LIVEABOARDS

Saudi Arabia, Farasan Banks - Red Sea

7 nights itinerary

- **Arrival airport:** King Abdulaziz International Airport, Jeddah (JED)
- **Departure airport:** King Abdulaziz International Airport, Jeddah (JED)

- **Embarkation:** Jeddah Red Sea Marina from 18:00
- **Disembarkation:** Jeddah Red Sea Marina at 09:00

Flights

Book flights to and from King Abdulaziz International Airport, Jeddah (JED), which is served by many direct or connecting flights from the UK, Europe, the Middle East, Asia and Africa.

Transfers

The liveaboard price includes a scheduled, shared transfer between Jeddah International Airport and Jeddah Red Sea Marina on embarkation and disembarkation days only.

- Pick up from Jeddah Airport is **at 15:00 or 22:00 only** on embarkation day
- Return transfer to Jeddah Airport is upon disembarkation at 09:00

Transfers from or to hotels, or at other times can be arranged for an additional charge.

Marine Park & Port Fees:

Marine park and port fees are included in the liveaboard price.

Minimum dive certification and experience:

The mandatory minimum requirement for divers joining this itinerary is PADI **Advanced Open Water Diver certification**, or equivalent, with **at least 40 logged dives**. Deep Diver (40 metres) and nitrox certification are strongly recommended.

Guests who do not fulfil these minimum requirements, or who the crew feel have insufficient experience in certain conditions, may be denied participation in some or all dives.

All divers must have insurance which covers scuba diving activities, including emergency evacuation and recompression chamber costs.

Itinerary details

Participation in this liveaboard itinerary is subject to acceptance of our Terms & Conditions as outlined here: https://masterliveaboards.com/terms-conditions/

Please be aware that this itinerary involves some long cruising periods, particularly between Jeddah and the Farasan Banks.

Number of scheduled dives: Up to 17

While we endeavour to ensure the number of scheduled dives is fulfilled, this is only indicative and not guaranteed.

Safety and dive briefings are conducted in English. If you or any of your group do not speak or fully understand English, please let us know in advance.

The following is an example of the day-to-day itinerary.

Day 1: Embarkation at 18:00 followed by dinner and orientation briefings.

Day 2-6: Up to 3 dives each day, scheduled as follows.

- Wake-up call followed by breakfast
- Briefing and Dive 1
- Lunch and relaxation period
- Briefing and Dive 2
- Snacks and relaxation period
- Briefing and Dive 3
- Dinner

The exact itinerary and number of dives each day may vary depending on sea conditions and logistics.

Day 7: Two morning* dives before we return to port in the early afternoon, where Saudi Master will remain at anchor overnight.

Day 8: Breakfast on board followed by disembarkation at 09:00 and transfer to the airport or your hotel.

**We kindly request that guests check their flight departure times to ensure they leave at least 18 hours (ideally 24 hours) between their final dive and their flight home.*

Disclaimer: The following information is only a general indication of the main areas covered on this itinerary and the sites that we normally visit. The inclusion of specifically named dive sites is not guaranteed and is at the Cruise Director's and Captain's discretion. Additionally, **there may be dives at locations along the itinerary route** that are not listed below.

The safety of all on board is paramount, and we always do our best to offer diving at alternative locations should we be unable to visit those listed below.

The area:

The majority of the reefs are located about 50–68 km (31–42 mi) offshore. They are mostly isolated atolls and flat sandy islands where turtles nest, seabirds breed, and vertical walls rise from depth. Most dives follow a similar pattern: descending onto a sandy plateau

dotted with coral towers, proceeding to the corner where the current brings in pelagics, then returning along the wall.

South Gorgonian Reef (Shabrur): a submerged atoll named for the gorgonians that line its entire wall. A long southern plateau at 25–38 m (82–125 ft) is covered in grape coral and small, colourful coral towers, with fusiliers everywhere and a resident barracuda school overhead. The point is draped in gorgonians and soft coral, with jacks in the current and grey reef sharks below.

Twenty Miles: a circular pinnacle, roughly 50 metres (164ft) in diameter, whose top sits at 10 m (33 ft). The wall drops to a sandy ring at 30 m (98 ft) scattered with coral blocks and grape coral, opening on the south side into a double terrace down to 45 m (148 ft). Grey reef sharks, big trevally and tuna come in on the current, fusiliers and sardines school along the wall, and anthias crowd the top.

Long South Reef: a long, narrow reef where strong currents can make the dive challenging. Its plateau slopes from 15 m to 40 m (49 ft to 131 ft) across hard coral, sand channels and mounds of purple soft coral, and the shallows are an almost lunar landscape of hard coral. The southern point draws schools of barracuda, trevally and tuna, grey reef sharks along the wall and hammerheads in the blue.

South West Malathu: a wide plateau at 30 m (98 ft), dotted with coral towers, runs out to a vertical drop-off with a large rock block standing off the wall. This is where the current hits, and one of the best spots on the Banks for hammerheads, grey reef sharks and silky sharks. Jacks, barracuda and turtles are common on the plateau.

North Mudarr: an elongated reef with a pod of dolphins often seen at its exposed ends. The north plateau at 35 m (115 ft) is open sand and isolated coral heads, edged by a coral ridge and a vertical wall of fan and whip gorgonians falling to well beyond recreational depths. Barracuda and trevally gather off the point, with grey reef and silky sharks deeper and hammerheads in the blue. The east wall is cut by deep cracks and caves and covered in soft coral.

North Dohra: a wide sandy plateau at 30–40 m (98–131 ft), with two large coral heads rising to 15 m (49 ft) and narrow, fish-filled gullies between them and the wall. Trevally hold station off the point, where a solitary hammerhead sometimes appears. Further along, the east wall is broken by large caves between 30 m and 60 m (98 ft and 197 ft)

Southeast Dohra: a small plateau at 28 m (92 ft) with a mixture of coral varieties, trevally and tuna at the current-swept corners, and groups of surgeonfish and other reef fish around the edges. The wall is a mass of soft coral, and a 30 m (98 ft) long ravine at 15 m (49 ft), its ceiling hung with small gorgonians, often has small sharks resting on the sand.

Choppy Reef: a north-south reef, with an emerald lagoon and a tidal sand islet. Its south-east wall is thick with black coral bushes from 10 m (33 ft) down, many hung with colonial sponges and sea squirts in every colour. Hawkfish hide in the branches and reef sharks rest in the sandy clefts that cut into the wall.

Danak North: an extensive plateau at 25 m (82 ft) dotted with coral towers, with turtles almost everywhere and trevally in the blue. A second plateau at 35 m (115 ft) is lined with whip coral and patrolled by reef sharks.

North Jadir: a gentle site with a long, sandy plateau at 25–30 m (82–98 ft) along the north side of Al Jadir, where turtles rest between nesting. The east and west walls have some of

the most varied, intact hard coral on the route, with large caves and anemones to the west and anemone-capped pinnacles at 15 m (49 ft) to the east.

Shi'b As Saqah: a white sand plateau at 30 m (98 ft) with small coral formations, and a terrace at 25 m (82 ft) of large coral blocks covered in gorgonians and soft coral, where a counter-current brings in tuna and trevally. Along the main wall, a sandy channel leads to a series of large coral blocks cut into the reef at around 15 m (49 ft), with light filtering through the gaps and large numbers of rabbitfish.

Qadd Humais: two islands of fine white sand that grow and shrink with the tide. A plateau at 30 m (98 ft) is covered in coral towers smothered in soft coral, with stingrays in the sand channels between them. The outer wall is a mass of gorgonians, soft coral and black coral with lots of macro life down to 45 m (148 ft), where manta rays are regularly seen.

Should you have any questions regarding the diving or whether this itinerary is suitable for your experience level, please contact our reservations team dive@masterliveaboards.com